



August 11, 2020

Dear NCS Families-

The NCS School Board held our August board meeting on Monday evening, August 10th, 2020 where we conducted the routine business of the board and acted on two important decisions that impact our NCS Families. This letter outlines the action taken.

NCS campus will open to on-site instruction this fall

After discussion, the plan remains to open Northwest Christian Schools of Lacey to on-site instruction for fall of 2020 with health and safety protocols in place.

NCS developed plans to reopen school following the guidelines established by the CDC and OSPI. These safety protocols are designed to help protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of our students, our staff and all our NCS families. These mitigation strategies (physical distancing, face coverings, hand hygiene, limited group size) are extensive but necessary for making reopening as safe as possible. There are many schools in the county, public and private that may not be able to provide an in-person model that allows for physical distancing and as such have announced they will not be opening. However, we feel these strategies are much easier to implement in schools with small student bodies and large campuses, like ours.

Our enrollment numbers are vastly smaller than enrollment at any public school in the North Thurston School District. NCS currently has less than 250 students in K-12, compared to public schools in our North Thurston School District, which have enrollment of 700-1,800 students per school.

On July 23rd the CDC published an article *The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall*. In this article the CDC urges policymakers to consider the full spectrum of benefits and risks of both in-person and virtual learning options. We know our children learn better in the classroom and we know that being in the class with friends helps our children to grow emotionally, spiritually, socially and sets them up for better academic success.

On August 5th, the Washington State Department of Health produced a Decision Tree for Provision of In Person Learning which gives schools guidance on safe and permissible in-person learning. NCS fits these criteria. The State and County Governments have given criteria and recommendations but have also recognized that schools are all situated differently and can make their own choices to open based on their ability to comply with the safety precautions. We believe the best choice for our children currently, is to receive face-to-face instruction in the classroom with safety precautions in place.

Tuition remains the same for on-site instruction and remote learning

It has been asked if NCS will offer a discount on tuition if we transition to remote learning. The operational costs to run our school do not appreciably change if we transition to remote

learning. Tuition dollars pay for education (teachers and office staff and infrastructure), not for the peripheral services which account for the fluctuations in cost. Of course, there are other considerations as well. This decision was not easy and the board carefully considered not only the best interests of our schools, but we also considered how we value the hard work of our teachers and administration, the family budget considerations for all of our families, and how we value our parents who deeply care about the quality of the education that our children receive at Northwest Christian Schools. For these reasons, we are unable to extend a discount on tuition during remote learning, however we are excited to announce the new Wolverine Fund which may be a source of help for some.

Introducing the Wolverine Fund



A very generous donation was made to NCS in June and the school board decided to use that donation to establish the **Wolverine Fund**. This fund will provide our financial office additional options to help meet the financial needs of our students who need assistance with tuition. In the coming days, you will receive more information about the Wolverine Fund, and learn how you can apply for tuition assistance or how you can donate to the fund to help those in need.

Thank you for your prayers on behalf of the entire NCS community and for your support during these challenging times. We continue to trust in and lean on the promises of our Lord during these uncertain times.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths.” -Proverbs 3:5-6

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Kearns'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'J' being particularly large and stylized. It is located below the word 'Respectfully,'.

Jenna Kearns
NCS Board Chair

Janée McSheffrey
NCS Board Vice-Chair

Mike Michael
NCS Board Treasurer

Michael Montgomery
NCS Board Secretary

Sam Christensen
NCS Board Member

Kody Helms
NCS Board Member

Adrian Menard
NCS Board Member